

Cultural resources are material evidence of past human activities. In the National Park Service, specialists in this field:

- Identify, evaluate, document, establish basic information about, and in some cases register, cultural resources
- Identify people associated with a park for two or more generations whose interests in the park's resources began prior to the park's establishment
- Plan to ensure that management decisions and priorities integrate cultural resources needs and provide for consultation and collaboration with outside entities
- Preserve and protect cultural resources, and make those resources available for public understanding and enjoyment.

The types of cultural resources are related to disciplines such as archeology, curation, ethnography, history, and historical architecture. Although each type is closely associated with a particular discipline, an interdisciplinary approach is often used to document and evaluate cultural resources.

### Archeology: Resources in the Ground

From the discarded points of 10,000 years ago to the trash heaps of hotels, humans leave behind evidence of their presence. These pieces of evidence and the sites where they are found comprise the archeological resources of Yellowstone.

Archeologists have identified more than 1,100 prehistoric sites in Yellowstone—many more may exist. About two percent of the park has been surveyed for archeological sites, mostly along road corridors prior to construction or along the shores of Yellowstone Lake where erosion is uncovering and destroying sites.

The oldest known site is a shoreline site at risk from erosion. Rather than stopping that natural process, archeologists began testing the site in 2000.

### YELLOWSTONE'S CULTURAL RESOURCES

- More than 125 ethnographic resources (animals, plants, sites); many provided by the more than two dozen affiliated tribes
- Approximately 1,100 prehistoric and historic Native American archeological sites and historic European American archeological sites
- 6 National Historic Landmarks
- 1 National Historic Landmark District
- 5 National Historic Districts and 5 listed sites
- Museum collection of more than 379,000 cultural objects and natural science specimens available to researchers
- Archives containing thousands of irreplaceable historic documents
- Thousands of books and periodicals available to the public; plus manuscripts and rare books available to historians and other researchers
- 90,000 historic photographs for use by staff, scholars, authors, and filmmakers



That summer archeologists also worked at a contemporary site of historic significance. The Lake Hotel is the oldest hotel still existing in the park. For decades, workers disposed of trash in pits behind the hotel. One of those sites was uncovered during maintenance and evaluated by the cultural resources staff. They found a large variety of materials from the early 20th century, including a key chain, old bricks, a jar of petroleum jelly with a top made after 1908, and a lot of beverage bottles. No one story reveals itself in these artifacts; instead, a more general picture emerges of life at that time.

*This photo, from 1933, conveys a wealth of historic information. It shows Max Big Man and his daughter, Myrtle, of the Crow Tribe. Max made presentations about how the Crow lived at the time of fur trappers. The tribe ceded part of its territory to the park in 1868. The photo also shows how interpretive signs once looked, and provides a visual record of Giant Geyser's appearance at the time.*

### Cultural Landscapes

A cultural landscape is a geographic area associated with a historic event, activity, or person or it exhibits other cultural or esthetic values. Cultural landscapes can be formally nominated as historical districts in the National Register of Historic Places.

Yellowstone doubtless contains dozens of cultural landscapes, both Native American and European American, but few have been studied so far. Tribes have identified sacred sites (considered ethnographic landscapes) but none have yet been formally evaluated. Fort Yellowstone and the Old Faithful area are other known cultural landscapes. Two cultural landscapes have been officially recognized: the road system, and Apollinaris Spring, a site between Mammoth and Norris.

### Ethnography: Resources of the People

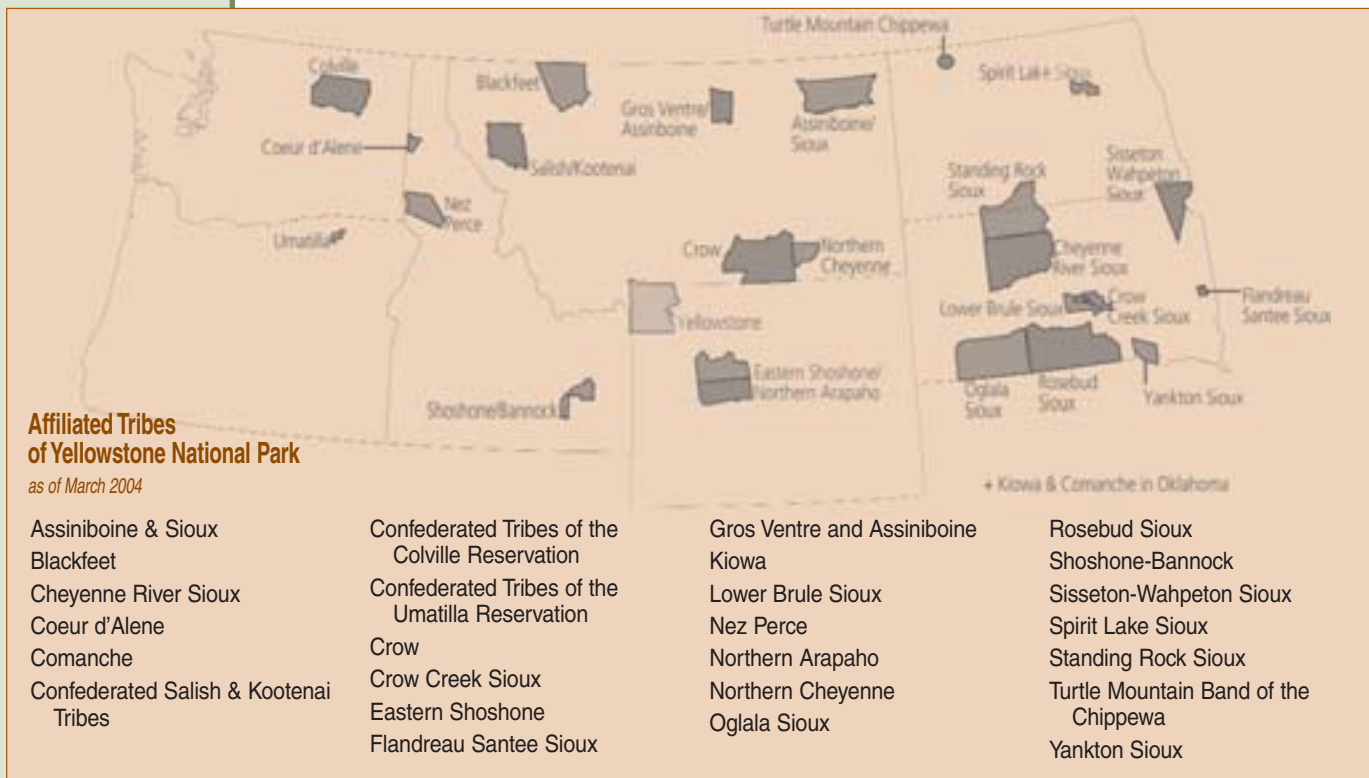
Ethnographic resources are the natural and cultural features of a park that are significant to people traditionally associated with the park. These places are closely linked with the development and maintenance of their identity as a community. Ethnographic resources may be sites identified by oral history as

where a tribe began. They may be sites that support ceremonial activities, are hunting or gathering places, or are associated with migration routes and histories. Preservation of these resources is mandated by laws and executive orders, some of which are described on page 135.

### Tribal Affiliates

Yellowstone's traditionally associated groups are the park's affiliated tribes (*see below*). Their ancestral presence is shown through archeological documentation, ethnohistoric documentation, interviews with tribal elders, and ongoing consultations (*see Chapter 1*). Some tribes lived here through a few seasons at least, if not year-round. Others came for ceremonial reasons, and almost all have hunted and gathered, traded and raided here. Certain places and resources remain important to these tribes' sense of themselves and in maintaining their traditional practices.

Right now Yellowstone National Park has more than 125 ethnographic resources identified by tribal peoples. These include animals such as bison, plants, hydrothermal areas, mineral paints from hydrothermal areas, Yellowstone Lake, vision questing sites, obsidian, rendezvous sites, and hunting sites.



Tribes and Yellowstone National Park have a mutual interest in cultural preservation. Tribes want traditions to survive and the National Park Service wants to assist such preservation as part of its commitment to protecting cultural resources. In addition, tribes are sovereign nations whose leaders have a legal relationship with the federal government that is not shared by the general public. Consequently, representatives of Yellowstone's affiliated tribes participate in periodic consultation meetings with park managers. They bring tribal perspectives to current issues such as bison management. (Bison in Yellowstone are a precious resource to all affiliated tribes.) Tribes also comment on park projects that could affect their ethnographic resources.

### By Word of Mouth

Oral histories provide information to help with resource management, interpretation, and documentation. They also can provide evidence of human use where scant archeological evidence and little or no written information exists.

Native American tribes relate their histories through the oral tradition, and in recent years some of Yellowstone's affiliated tribes have been willing to be interviewed about their history. For example, the Kiowa of Oklahoma spoke of their people being in Yellowstone from the 1400s to the 1700s. They also told the heroic story of their creator giving Yellowstone to the Kiowa as their homeland. The site where this occurred is Dragon's Mouth, a hot spring in the Mud Volcano area. Elders of the Nez Perce have also visited sites in Yellowstone, especially those associated with their people's flight through the park in 1877 (*see page 24*). They spoke emotionally about this trek, adding a different and valuable dimension to our understanding of this historic event.

Together with archeology and history, oral tradition enriches our understanding about Yellowstone's complex history. This knowledge also assists with the management of Yellowstone's heritage resources in a way that strengthens the ability of indigenous peoples to perpetuate their culture and to enrich parks with a deeper sense of place.

The history of park management is also being documented through oral histories conducted with former and current employees. The first project was a history of the northern range, in

which dozens of former employees were interviewed about elk management in the 1950s and 60s. The employees contributed stories of what it was like to round up elk, how they felt about participating in this operation, and how the public reacted. Other projects include an oral history of the Civilian Conservation Corps, in which surviving workers have been interviewed, and an on-going oral history of scientists and rangers involved in bear management over the years.

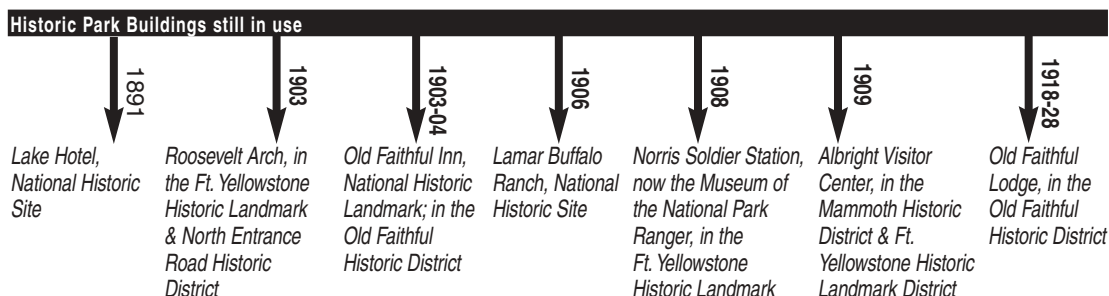
These interviews now reside on CDs, in written transcripts, and—in some cases—as videos in the park's archives.



*Above: Nez Perce tribal representatives sit at Nez Perce Ford and relate the story of their people's flight through Yellowstone (*see page 24*).*

*Right: The late historian Aubrey Haines documented Yellowstone history through careful research and conversations with the "old timers."*





### Historic Structures & Districts

Historic buildings are preserved because of their role in the park's history and/or as examples of architectural styles. At some sites, visitors can learn about the region's last 131 years through exhibits, publications, and tours led by park and concession interpreters.

#### *Mammoth Hot Springs/Fort Yellowstone*

In March 2002, Mammoth Hot Springs Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It includes Fort Yellowstone, where thirty-five structures remain from the 1890s and early 1900s when the U.S. Army administered the park (*see pages 24–25*). Significant developments occurred here in national conservation

policies that led to the origin of the National Park Service. In July 2003, Fort Yellowstone was listed as a National Historic Landmark District—the highest historic designation possible.

#### *Lake Hotel*

The Lake Hotel is the oldest operating hotel in the park. At the time it was opened, in 1891, the building resembled any other railroad hotel financed by the Northern Pacific Railroad. But in 1903, the architect of the Old Faithful Inn, Robert Reamer, master-minded the renovation of the hotel, designing the ionic columns, extending the roof in three places, and adding the 15 false balconies, which prompted it to be known for many years as the “Lake Colonial Hotel.” By 1929, number of additional changes—addition of the dining room, porte-cochere (portico), sun-room, plus the refurbishing of the interior—created the landmark we see today. The hotel was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1991.

#### *Roosevelt Arch*

Visitors who enter Yellowstone at the North Entrance pass through the Roosevelt Arch in the North Entrance Road Historic District and part of the Fort Yellowstone Historic Landmark. This soaring stone structure was designed in 1903 by Robert Reamer.

President Theodore Roosevelt placed the cornerstone for the arch. The top of the arch is inscribed with a line from the Yellowstone National Park Act of 1872: “For the benefit and enjoyment of the people.”

#### *Roosevelt Area*

Diners at Roosevelt Lodge (Roosevelt had camped nearby) view much the same



Above: Albright Visitor Center, above, in the Mammoth Hot Springs Historic District and Ft. Yellowstone Historic Landmark District, housed the first “information office” (visitor center).  
Right: Lake Hotel, a National Historic Site





landscape seen by visitors when the lodge first opened in 1920. The area surrounding and including the lodge is registered as the Roosevelt Lodge Historic District.

### ***The Buffalo Ranch***

The Lamar Buffalo Ranch Historic District overlooks Lamar Valley. The ranch, which operated from 1906 until the 1950s, was the focal point of an effort to increase the herd size of the few remaining bison in Yellowstone. Remnants of irrigation ditches, fencing, and water troughs can still be found, and four buildings from the original ranch compound remain (*photo above*)—two residences, the bunkhouse, and the barn. New cabins, which blend with the historic buildings, house students at the Yellowstone Association Institute or the National Park Service's residential environmental education program.

### ***Old Faithful Inn & Historic District***

Most people who step into the Old Faithful Inn (*photo right*) for the first time stop as their eyes follow thick rustic logs up to the soaring peak of the ceiling. Robert Reamer designed this National Historic Landmark, which opened in 1904. It is the centerpiece of the Old Faithful Historic District.

The Old Faithful Lodge, part of the historic district, is a result of numerous changes dating back to the early days of tent camps. In 1918, a laundry was built on the site and construction continued until 1928 when the lodge reached its present configuration.

### ***Trailside Museums***

Four trailside museums were built in Yellowstone as part of a national idea that a national park is itself a museum and an interpretive structure should blend in with its



*Left: Ranger residences in the Lamar Buffalo Ranch Historic District.*

*Below: Old Faithful Inn, which opened 100 years ago, in May 1904.*



surroundings and its exhibits explain but not substitute for the park experience. The museums here are well-known examples of the architectural style, National Park Rustic (also called “parkitecture”).

The Old Faithful Museum was the first trailside museum in Yellowstone. It opened in 1929 to acclaim for its quality materials and construction, and for the way it blended into its surroundings. It was replaced by the current visitor center in 1972, which is eligible for the National Historic Register.

The Norris Museum, built in 1930 and still in use, is a gateway to the Norris Geyser Basin.

## Cultural Resources

### 1 National Historic Landmark District:

Fort Yellowstone

### 6 National Historic Landmarks:

Fishing Bridge  
Trailside Museum  
Madison Junction  
Trailside Museum  
Norris Geyser  
Basin Trailside  
Museum  
Northeast  
Entrance Station  
Obsidian Cliff  
Old Faithful Inn

### 5 National Register Historic Districts:

Lake Fish  
Hatchery  
Mammoth Hot  
Springs  
North Entrance  
Road  
Old Faithful Area  
Roosevelt Lodge

### 5 National Historic Sites:

Lake Hotel  
Lamar Buffalo  
Ranch  
Obsidian Cliff  
Kiosk  
Queen's Laundry  
Bath House  
Post Office at  
Mammoth Hot  
Springs

Visitors first glimpse the area's hydrothermal features from a breezeway; they learn about the features from exhibits in the wings.

The Madison Museum (*photo right*), overlooking the junction of the Gibbon and Firehole rivers, features many elements associated with National Park Rustic: stone and wood-shingled walls, and rafters of peeled logs. Built in 1930, it now serves as an information station and bookstore.

The Fishing Bridge Museum, built in 1932, retains many of its original exhibits as an example of early National Park Service displays. On the lake side of the museum, visitors can cross a flagstone terrace overlooking the lake and descend steps to the shore.

### Canyon Village

The Canyon Village development is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places because of its place in Mission 66 history (*see page 26*). The visitor center (*photo below*) was designed to deliver information to visitors quickly and efficiently. Interpretive exhibits were minimal; films quickly presented the park's "story." The Canyon Visitor Center no longer meets the needs of visitors and is closed for extensive renovation to solve these problems. When done, it will reflect a combination of this



*The Madison Trailside Museum, now an information station*

building's original architectural style—"National Park Service Modern"—and that of the last Canyon Hotel (no longer standing), which was Arts and Crafts style.

### National Register of Historic Places

*The National Register of Historic Places is the Nation's official list of cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the National Register is part of a national program to coordinate and support public and private efforts to identify, evaluate, and protect our historic and archeological resources. Properties listed in the Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture. The National Register is administered by the National Park Service. Currently 73,000 listings have been nominated by governments, organizations, and individuals because they are important to a community, a state, or the nation.*

### National Historic Landmarks

*National Historic Landmarks are nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior because they possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, fewer than 3,500 historic places bear this national designation. Working with citizens throughout the nation, the National Historic Landmarks program draws upon the expertise of National Park Service staff who evaluate potential landmarks and provide assistance to existing landmarks.*



***Lodging No Longer Standing***

Marshall House, which stood near the present-day intersection of Fountain Flats Drive and Grand Loop Road, was built in 1880 and was the second hotel in the park. Later renamed the Firehole Hotel, it was torn down between 1892 and 1895.

Fountain Hotel opened in 1891 north of Fountain Paint Pot. This was one of the first Yellowstone hotels where bears were fed for the entertainment of guests. The hotel closed after 1916 and was torn down in 1927.

Three lodging facilities were built at Norris. The first, built in 1886, burned before it opened. The second, Larry's Lunch Station, provided lodging for 10–20 people who “wanted to tarry.” The final hotel at Norris served the public from 1901 through 1916.

Three hotels were built in succession at Canyon, the last being the largest hotel in the park. Sited where the horse stables are now, the Canyon Hotel was closed in 1958 due to financial and/or maintenance problems and burned in 1960.

These and other sites of former park facilities are historic archeologic sites. They are studied and documented for what they reveal about the history of visitor use in the park.

**More Than a Century of Collecting**

The park maintains a unique and valuable collection of prehistoric and historic artifacts, documents, and specimens that reflects the unique resources and history of Yellowstone. It includes paintings and pencil sketches by Thomas Moran; photographs by William H. Jackson; historic hotel furnishings; historic vehicles; park souvenirs; archeological objects; and fossil and plant specimens.

Historic photographs document European American explorations of the region and the history of the park. Historians consult these photos for visual information; the park's landscape architects consult them to plan historically accurate renovations. Documentary filmmakers request photos of people and the park to visually tell the story of Yellowstone.

The park maintains archives through an agreement with the National Archives and Records Administration. Irreplaceable documents include manuscripts and diaries by N.P. Langford and Thomas Moran, logs from park patrols and management, and field notes from researchers who have studied Yellowstone's cultural and natural resources.

A new collection facility—the Heritage Center—will open this year in Gardiner, Montana near the North Entrance. It will house the Yellowstone Research Library, archives, and most of the museum collection.

**Cultural Resource Laws**

*These laws guide the management of historic and cultural resources in national parks:*

***The Antiquities Act*** (1906) provides for the protection of historic, prehistoric, and scientific features on and artifacts from federal lands.

***The Historic Sites Act*** (1935) sets a national policy to “preserve for future public use historic sites, buildings, and objects.”

***The National Historic Preservation Act*** (1966) authorizes the creation of the National Register of Historic Places and gives extra protection to national historic landmarks and properties in the national register. National parks established for their historic value automatically are registered; others, such as Yellowstone, must nominate landmarks and properties to the register.

***The Archeological and Historic Preservation Act*** (1974) provides for the preservation of significant scientific, historic, and archeological material and data that might be lost or destroyed by federally sponsored projects. For example, federal highway projects in Yellowstone include archeological surveys.

***The Archeological Resources Protection Act*** (1979) provides for the preservation and custody of excavated materials, records, and data.

***The Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act*** (1990) assigns ownership or control of Native American human remains, funerary objects, and sacred objects of cultural patrimony to culturally affiliated Native American groups.

***American Indian Religious Freedom Act*** (AIRFA) protects and preserves American Indian access to sites, use and possession of sacred objects, and the freedom to worship through ceremonials and traditional rites.

***Executive Order 13007*** guarantees access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites by Indian religious practitioners and that these sites not be adversely affected.

## For More Information

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## Additional Information from Yellowstone National Park

Yellowstone National Park website, [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell), includes an array of park information about resources, science, recreation, and issues.

*Yellowstone Science*, published quarterly, reports on research and includes articles on natural and cultural resources. Free; available from the Yellowstone Center for Resources, in the Yellowstone Research Library, or online at [www.nps.gov/yell](http://www.nps.gov/yell).

*Yellowstone Today*, published seasonally and distributed at entrance gates and visitor centers, includes features on park resources such as hydrothermal features.

Site Bulletins, published as needed, provide more detailed information on park topics such as bison management, lake trout, grizzly bears, and wolves. Free; available upon request from visitor centers.